1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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and sisters' children would gather to divide what wealth there was. The greatest share would, of course, go to the brother who would marry the widow, but all the others would get something.

"And his children, the children he made, would they get anything?"

"Why no, the children he made are his wife's children. They belong to the family of his wife!"

"But suppose he cared for them very much. . . ."

"Then he might have made them some presents now and then when he was alive, but even then some people say it is better not to give them too much. When a man dies his possessions go to his family. If this man's children, who really belong to his wife, were to take things now, they would get a kunu for it, and they might get another kunu which the father had, for if they got his possessions, his kunu would go to them, too, and there would perhaps be one in their own family that had come to them through their mother. No man or woman wants this."

It is kunu, then, which sees to it that the tribal law of succession and inheritance through the female line is not violated.

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There was the case of Asikanu, our paddler, who was the brother of the head of an important clan, which gave us still another instance of the workings of kunu. Asikanu was, in his own right, not a negligible figure. When his brother died, it might be he who would succeed to the headship of the clan. When the other paddlers wanted things of us, they would come to ask in his name. "It is not a small thing when Asikanu asks," they would say. "He is a big man; he is the brother of our chief. You must not refuse him."

Asikanu had a way with the women, although it would have been best if at least one of them had resisted him. She was married, and, when her husband discovered her infidelity, she went to Asikanu. Now this was as it should

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Kasanya glanced at the boy, who showed by his manner his eagerness to accompany his father, and then at his sister. "How will it be with you, sister, if Adyabu goes? Do you want him to go with Misomba?"

"Yes," she replied. "Misomba will care for him. Let him go."

The three older people talked over the details of the trip down the river, until it was made clear to all that Adyabu would share whatever money his father might receive for the lumber.

"You will treat him well, brother-in-law," said Kasanya, with a smile, "for in a few years his girl will be ripe for marrying, and he will need money for a fine wedding."

That night we talked this over with Kasanya.

"Why must a man ask another if he may take his own son with him on a journey? Is a man not to be trusted to take care of a boy he himself has made?"

"You do not understand, Bak'a. It is not that we don't trust Misomba," he replied. "He has lived with my sister for many years. She is his first wife, and my family have always liked him. When my sister's eldest daughter was asked in marriage by a man of this village, and our great family came together here to consider whether we should promise her to him or not, we asked Misomba to give us his advice. Misomba does not have a bold face. He did not speak until after much urging. To ask a man's advice about what does not concern his own family is a great honor. But we did this, and when he spoke, we found that what he said was good. So, you see, it is not that we do not trust Misomba."

We encouraged him to explain further.

"Adyabu is not his heir. He is the child of my sister and belongs to my family. I am the one to say what he is to do and what he is not to do, because I am the oldest living brother. Adyabu does not belong to Misomba's family. He is of my blood. When I die, he will inherit my possessions. When Misomba dies, his possessions will go to his own

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604 428 brothers and to his sisters' children. That is how we live here in the bush. That is how we do."

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591 When a man marries, he either arranges to take his wife to live in his own village—his mother's village—or to stay in that of his wife. Whether he chooses the one village or the other, he has to build a house there for her, and this becomes her *wosu*, her household. If he wishes, he may build two houses, one in his own village, and one in the village of his wife. Kasanya's younger brother built two houses for his first wife. One was on the lower river, next to Kasanya's own house, and the other we would reach after two days' further travel up the river.

Yet the man, explained Kasanya, if the couple were living in the village of the wife, or the woman, if their house was in his village, was not entirely at home. In one's own village a person was a *gomi*, a child of the "ground." He belonged there. But when living in another's village, even though it was that of a husband or wife, one was a [609] *wakama'*, a stranger, and if a man of the village but uttered this word "wakama'" to such an individual, the outsider had to take up his belongings and leave at once. Were the [688] stranger, in turn, to speak aloud the word "gomi," disaster would follow, for the earth spirits, having been disturbed, would be sure to take their toll.

594 The *wosu*—the household—is the unit of family life, whether, in its physical location, it is in one village or two villages. In it a woman lives with her husband, and here the 596 children are reared. After the wosu comes the larger family unit, the *mbi*, composed of those who have come from the [614] common womb of a more remote ancestress, while several of these larger or extended families form a clan.

"If a man has more than one wife," said Kasanya, "then 595 he makes more than one house. A man never puts two wives in the same house. It would not be good. Each woman has her own house, where she lives with her children. It must be so. The children of the first wife belong to her

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family. The children of the second wife belong to the family of the second wife. A woman calls her husband's other wife by the name of kamboea. Do you know what kamboea means?" he asked, laughing. "*Kamboea*—the woman who makes trouble for me. So, you see, we people of the bush learned from our ancestors to give each wife her own house, where she might live with her own children."

But not alone the woman needed to have a house of her own. The man, too, built a house for himself. In it he stored his possessions. It was his sanctuary. No woman might enter it. On the carving of its door, a man lavished all his love of ornamentation, all his artistry.

"A man likes to have his own house for his possessions," explained Kasanya. "If he is a rich man, it is better that his wives do not know how much he has. You know what women are. They always ask for presents. But if a man is not rich, then it is better still that his wives do not know it. If they know, they will make life hard for him with nagging. They will talk of leaving him. And all the village will know, too."

In this house, then, which a man built for his wife, the children were reared. Sometimes, it is true, if the harvests were poor or the father had met with ill luck, the mother's brothers would come for the children, for children are the ones to carry on the line. It is through them that clan rank and material goods are inherited.

But if all went well with the father, then the attachments of the household were the closest, and they continued even after death. For the household was not entirely disrupted after the death of a parent. Unless the one who died had been a sorcerer, a leper, or a madman, the house where he lived was not torn down.

"When a man dies," Kasanya said, "the wife goes on living in the house, once it has been purified. If a woman dies, then the man keeps on living there."

"What of the children?" we asked. "What becomes of them?"

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Later, through the gathering darkness, the people of the neighboring villages went home, paddling their boats which were loaded down with the fish that had been netted. And from this time on, everyone knew that this neku vine was the property of him who had found it, and of his family, down through his mother's line, forever.

"Ai, mati, you would have seen something, if you had got here for the neku dance!"

6

Like any other Bush Negro village, S'ei was a series of sandy clearings about which were grouped huts of woven palm fronds and palm thatch. All about was the big bush. The trails which led from the village were each guarded by a magically treated palm azang, and shrines to the ancestral spirits who saw to it that evil was kept away. Where the several paths led, a stranger was not encouraged to discover. Down one, women were to be seen disappearing in the morning with trays on their heads, their infants astride their backs, held inside the folds of a cloth which was fastened high above their breasts, and caught up again below them. In many upper river villages, this path led to the fields, some distance away. Others were the way to shrines, erected to those spirits which must be worshiped outside the village. Another path might lead to a brook, which the villagers held sacred. There were trails, too, which connected neighboring villages, and led perhaps farther yet, but for the stranger, the highway was the river, and no matter how short the distance between one settlement and another, he was not invited to make his way through the bush.

"You do not want to go through the bush, white man. In the bush are evil spirits," we heard many times.

A village clearing was divided into quarters. Each quarter was inhabited by one of the *mbe*, or extended families, and the quarter bore its name. It was composed of several households—five or six or more, depending upon the size of the

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THE ARTIST OF MA'LOBBI

As we walked toward the chief's house we looked about us, seeing again the evidence that here at Ma'lobbi there were men who knew how to carve wood, seeing why it was that our paddlers had spoken of it as a place for fine work.

"Ai, at Ma'lobbi they are good carvers."

Here was a house with its doorposts elaborately carved; there a beautifully worked rice tray, lying where it had been left by the woman who owned it, until she should need it later in the day for winnowing her rice; farther along a great bench stood, with the designs cut through in a fluid progression over top and sides.

The captain was in the lower portion of his two-story house when we entered. Several of the older men, who had been present at our earlier visit and who remembered our gifts of tobacco, came to join us, as the news of our arrival spread through the village. Soon the women were standing about, motioning to the white woman to come with them.

The house in which the captain received us was larger and more imposing than the others in the village. It was his *gudu-wosu*—his treasure house. Its lower portion, where we sat in conversation with him, was where he worked. Above, where none of his wives might enter, his wealth was stored. Here he kept the pieces he had carved, and from here drew from time to time the presents he gave his wives. Here lay the wealth which his nephews would inherit when he died. But below, in the partially open shelter, was his workshop where he fashioned rough logs into stools and paddles, combs and food stirrers, trays and canoe seats, and all manner of objects which he and his women used in their daily routine.

All about the walls hung tools. There were machetes, whose sharp blades showed a reflection of fire from the sun which slanted on the wall. We had never seen so many of these bush knives on display, nor, for that matter, such an array of tools anywhere on this river. From projecting boards or nails driven into posts hung several compasses, their hinged arms sharp-pointed, so that the craftsman might describe the perfect circles on the wood he carved.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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posely to make the village as hard to reach as possible, to protect it from white invaders. From long experience the Djukas mistrust all white men.

In Jankoeso is lodged the general authority over the Saramaccaner tribe and the territory in which they live. He has forbidden the intrusion of any visitors unless they are announced several days beforehand, by messenger.

All the Granmans receive their title by matrilineal inheritance, and cannot be deposed. When one dies he is succeeded by his oldest sister's oldest male child, while his own sons never, under any circumstances, succeed him to the kingship. If there is no such person as his oldest sister's senior male child, then the succession passes on to the oldest male child of the nearest female relative. If the line dies out, and no relatives are eligible, the successor is elected by popular vote from among the captains of the river villages, but this seldom occurs. On such an occasion there may be a struggle between different lo, playing politics to get into power. Otherwise inheritance is strictly through the female line.

The Dutch government exerts only a nominal control over the Bush Negro tribes of the interior. Once every year the river Granmans come down the broad river highways to Paramaribo for a parley with the Governor of Surinam. After a ten-day canoe trip downstream, Jankoeso finds a train waiting for him at Kabel, to bring him ceremonially the rest of the way. The other rulers must come all the way by corial. On their long and often hazardous journey they are accompanied by their most powerful captains. The Gran-

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

prejudices about sex and marriage may become less rooted by a comparison with the customs of a primitive society.

The Djukas, like a number of other primitive tribes, reckon descent only through the female line; property rights are transmitted through the maternal side of the house. Fatherhood is a fact of relative unimportance.

Polygamy is the practice. Each wife lives in a separate hut (often in a separate village), which belongs to her because her husband built it for her. A man has as many wives as he wants, or can keep. The wives get along together fairly amicably. The cancer of matrimonial jealousy characteristic of our own system, is of narrow range and effect among the Djukas.

The head of the family is not the father, but the mother's oldest male relative—her brother or her mother's brother. *The father is technically unrelated to his children.* As a matter of biological fact, he can never be sure of his paternity, whereas maternity is never in doubt. All children belong to their mother's family, and are subject to the authority of her brother or her maternal uncle. The latter is more closely related to them than any other male.

A group of families related through the female line constitute a *m'beh,* and several m'beh together make up a *lo,* or clan. These groups are all reckoned through the mother. Husband and wife may belong to different m'beh and lo, but children of the union belong only to their mother's group. At first sight the father seems negligible in this arrangement, but it must be remembered that he is very likely the brother

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601 The very rigor of this principle seems to have to lead to a
613 scission of the lineages, for one can hardly conceive that people
571 will be willing to address girls younger than themselves as "my
[163] grandmother" and show them respect; now that must necessarily be the case at the end of a certain number of generations, for as we shall see, the fecundity of Boni women sometimes lasts up to the age of 50, and there are cases where the interval between the oldest and youngest child reaches 35 years.

Nevertheless, we have not actually observed that this conception of kinship leads to scissions or even to serious clashes.

That derives from the very nature of the hierarchy and the social ties within the matrilineage; they entail a collective tutelage by one generation over the next, and in the same way a collective tutelage by the ancestors over the living. But for the same reason that every prayer, every invocation addressed individually to such-and-such an ancestor is avoided, the hierarchy of the Refugee Blacks does not give rise to relationships of authority between one man and another, which would not be tolerated. Only the hedemi, or captain, designated by the assembly of the lineage, exerts a personal authority; even so, he is careful to limit it almost exclusively to religious functions.

604 "Uncles" exert collectively an authority over the generation
613 of "nephews." They meet in council, especially on the question of marriages. They do not vote, strictly speaking, but the opposition of three or four of them prevents the carrying out of a project. There is no preponderant voice for the closest uncles (yet in practice this seems to be taken into account). But the eldest of the uncles in the classificatory sense is unanimously recognized as preponderant.

602 Existence of patrilineages. Matrilineages are not the only kin
784 groups of the Refugee Blacks. Each one receives from his father
• 428 a fundamental interdiction -- bwasi kina -- which he will have

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602 784 to observe all his life and which he himself will transmit to his children. It is unanimously believed that breaking this interdiction causes leprosy (bwasi).

• 428 [753] This interdiction is never transmitted by women. It is transmitted from father to son /33/ or daughter. The son will observe it and transmit it; the daughter will observe it during her lifetime, but she will not transmit it.

602 784 The existence of the bwasi kina divides the Boni into de facto groupings which can be considered as patrilineages. These patrilineages have no name, no head, no organization; their members are dispersed among the various matrilineages and most of them do not know who the others are.

They exist nevertheless and extend throughout all the tribes of Refugee Blacks.

[582] Their importance in the eyes of the Refugee Blacks comes from the fact that they involve a law of exogamy: a man and a woman who have the same bwasi kina cannot marry; that would be pikadu, incest in the broad sense, an offense against exogamy, as much as the union of two members of the same matrilineage.

[262] [578] It is difficult to estimate the number of these patrilineages, which seems to us to be at least 20 among the Boni; actually, the Boni do not willingly tell their bwasi kina, for fear that one of their enemies might mix into their food a fragment of the interdicted food in order to harm them; besides, they do not know their paternal relations beyond their grandfather. Reconstitution of patrilineages by interrogation seems therefore to be illusory.

602 784 262 The bwasi kina we have been able to find out about are all about food. They involve the cayman, the "tiger," the tortoise, the white hen, the pian (awali), the eel. The cayman is often given in addition to another animal. But it is inaccurate to say that the Refugee Blacks have a general interdiction against the cayman.

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351 [134] [241] There are no gardens around the cabins because the conditions of the soil and climate render permanent cultivation impracticable. The nearest thing is a few persons planting some banana trees around the hut at the foot of which they spread the hearth ashes. As a general rule villages are closely hemmed in by secondary brushwood, and people plant far from one another and sometimes very far from the village.

361 137 311

423 824 If it does not admit the appropriation of land to individuals, custom does admit, on the other hand, the ownership of trees. In the villages the useful trees (coconut trees, maripa palms /attalea excelsa/, mango trees, cashew-apple trees, etc.) all [428] have owners. The tree is considered as personal property and is transmitted by inheritance in the same way as a gun or a canoe.

428 824 613 [222] The procedure employed by the Boni for the dispersion of the inheritance among the members of the lineage of the dead man sometimes has the effect of transmitting the ownership of a tree to a person who is not of the village. For example, in Boniville where a fraction of the Kotika lineage lives, two caumou palms were bequeathed a long time ago to members of the lineage living in Kotika, who come each year to gather the fruit.

Appendix

173 [125] ### Local Chronology Used for Determining Ages

1876 Death of Grand Man Atyaba.

1877 Trip of the explorer Crevaux from the Maroni to the Yari and the Amazon, in the company of Apatu, head of the Boni village.

[621] [361] 1882 Apatu secedes, taking with him about 150 persons and founds the village which bears his name on the lower course of the Maroni.

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Land held by right of use cannot be sold nor rented, but only loaned. Neither can it be transmitted by inheritance; this would be entirely contrary to the thinking and custom of the Refugee Blacks, hostile to everything that would violate the legal joint possession of the lineage. Inheritance can affect only the harvest in process from clearings. Once this harvest is made, the land can be occupied by any member of the lineage, man or woman, who wishes to cultivate it; and if there is any dispute, it is obligatorily settled within the lineage; the grand man would refuse to judge it. Kinship degree /78/ does not enter in, at least in principle, since they can say to each other "brother," "uncle," or "grandfather" in the classificatory sense.

The only attenuation of the rigor of this principle provided for by custom is that upon the death of a woman, her daughters have a right of priority to utilize her lands.

The Refugee Blacks have a clear tendency to remain faithful all their lives to the same clearings. The study we have made of the clearings in Boni country gives poor information on the history of each clearing, for it would have been necessary to be able to consult on the spot a large number of people, which we were not able to do; nevertheless it allows us to state that in the neighborhood of the residence villages, individuals keep their right of use of a clearing for the length of their lives.

Here is for example the transmission of rights over clearings 101 to 112 /sic/ (see genealogical table of the Dju lo) (1).

1. See plate at the end of this work: Distribution of lands in the neighborhood of the principal Boni villages.

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241 62 [184] under pain of losing their rights, to occupy the soil to the maximum. Besides, settled very far from their residence villages, they are led to creating more lasting establishments.

Among the Boni, farming habitations do not amount to much, built carelessly (to designate them one says kāpu (camp), and the groups who work there are not very stable.

423 241 [182] 184] However, the principles of establishment and functioning of farming habitations are exactly the same for the two tribes and result on the whole from the customary laws which, among the Refugee Blacks, govern the possession of land:

[425] [613] 1) When a man cuts a clearing in a zone which has never had any human establishment, he creates at the same time as a right of use for himself an imprescriptible real right for his lineage (bɛɛ) or more precisely for the fraction of the lineage living in the same village and subject to the same authority;

[428] [613] 2) This right is joint; at the death of an individual, anyone of that fraction of his lineage may occupy the lands he used to cultivate habitually. If there is a dispute, it must be settled within the framework of the lineage; /101/ /Fig. 17 appears here/ /102/

3) The extent of the zone over which this right is exercised is limited only by the zones over which other rights are exercised.

We have seen what mode of occupation of the soil resulted from these laws in the neighborhood of the "great villages." Here the distribution of lands among the farming habitations follows practically the same laws, whose effects are less rigorous, considering the very low density of occupation of the soil.

425 [361] 1) It is taken for granted that an isolated establishment in a quasi-deserted zone does not create lasting rights. If it happens to disappear, anybody may come to settle there after ascertaining from the first occupant that he no longer needs the place (such is the case with the very scattered establishments south of Simayé Falls up to Indian country; they do not create real territorial rights for the benefit of any lineage whatever.

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593 428 The nature of the relations with the mother is shown by the custom of inheritance. /136/ If a man dies while his mother is still living, his belongings return to her. She may keep them or divide them among the members of the lineage.

593 Role of the father. The father has no power over the children, but in general he is respected by them and his sons make no important decision without asking for his opinion.

In the very frequent case where the guardianship of the children is entrusted to the mother, the father exercises a de facto authority as long as the family group lasts. But in case of its break-up he loses any right over the children.

In general the father loves his children very much, but in the way Europeans love their nephews, he avoids taking a hand too closely in their education, which is the responsibility of the uncles, who might invite him not to busy himself with family affairs.

593 429 591 But if the father has received the guardianship of one or several children, the situation is completely different. If the family group breaks up, he takes them along with him. Besides, as a general rule, even if he gets along well with his wife, he settles in his own village the children whose guardianship has been entrusted to him, close to his maternal family; henceforth it is he who will provide entirely not only for their maintenance but for their food; except for periods when the husband spends some time with them near his wife, the latter no longer has to feed them.

593 429 If the father has received the guardianship of a child, he can in turn delegate it under his responsibility to someone of his lineage. We have noted several examples of this practice. For example Afoondo (Aw.B.1, F56), about 23 years old in 1957, had been entrusted to his father Koniman (Lapé), who had himself turned him over to his own mother Awènkina.

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593 429 769 The fact that some children are under the guardianship of their father changes nothing about their position with respect to ancestor worship and does not entail any payment or compensation whatever on the part of the father. When the child has grown up he will be able to come back to live in his maternal kin group (which he does most often) or stay in his father's village. On this point there is no precise customary obligation.

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593 884 The father plays an important role with respect to the children when they reach manhood; he procures their ɔbia for them and transmits the knowledge and magical powers which he himself received from his father.

429 428 Inheritance of guardianship. At the death of the guardian, his office is bequeathed in the same way as his goods and according to the same principle of dispersion of the inheritance. If he was raising several children, the guardianship of each one will be bequeathed individually.

For example Béniti (†1944) was raising ○K... 1944, daughter of her daughter Baïkom, and ○W... 1942, daughter of her son Fintiman and a woman of Papaïston village. She bequeathed the first to her daughter Kulina, the second to her daughter Baïkom settled in Loka village. W... thus found herself taken to a village which was neither that of her maternal nor her paternal relatives. Such cases are not rare. The child's uncles, who in principle could take back the guardianship, never seem to oppose, in practice, its being bequeathed. /137/

The spiritual power kept by the guardian over his ward after he becomes adult is bequeathed in the same manner. Thus, in the preceding example, Béniti († 1955) /sic/ bequeathed the spiritual tutelage she was keeping over each one of her adult sons and daughters whom she had raised herself, in part to outsiders to her lineage.

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428 She bequeathed thus her guardianship over Fintiman (46 years) to the grand man
over Klémenti (43 years) to Samalobi, the grand man's brother
over ○ Kulina (38 years) to Samalobi
over ○ Eliana (40 years) to the grand man.

But she bequeathed nothing concerning her last two children, ○ Baïkom (35 years) and ○ Maria (28) respectively brought up by △ Malobi, Béniti's husband, and by ○ Aliki, an old woman of the Dju lineage. It will behoove these two persons to bequeath, at their death, the spiritual tutelage over the girls they have raised.

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Marriage

It is for lack of a more appropriate word that we use the word "marriage" with respect to the Refugee Blacks; the word concubinage is unpleasant to use; nevertheless it fits better what the union of a man and woman represents in the thought of the Refugee Blacks as in their social life.

In the organization we have just described no stable and permanent tie between a man and woman is implied.

831 Actually the Refugee Blacks, with rare exceptions, appear to be incapable of associating a strong and lasting emotional tie with sexual union. They are unstable in this respect, always in search of new adventures and not settling on any one. Their unions are more inspired by material concern (getting the

764 /162 cont./
787 business of the tribunal. The people of the dead person's lineage
761 will have to settle that among themselves after the obsequies.
[784] The role of the tribunal is to make official the cause of death and give it the force of law.

764 Then the inheritance is taken up in the presence of the
787 near relatives of the dead man. The questions are asked suc-
428 cessively: "To whom dost thou leave thy boat...?" "To whom dost thou leave thy gun (1)...?" The coffin moves each time

> 1. That, unless the dead man has, before his death, in front of witnesses, formally indicated the apportionment of his belongings; in such a case, questions are asked only for the objects whose attribution had not been clearly specified.

toward one of the people present. /Figs. 22 and 23 appear here/

764 /163/ At the end of the third day after the death the
[789] burial is prepared; the dead person is asked from daybreak on whether he is ready for that; if not it can be postponed until the next day.

[767] The ɔlɔnã have been working at the cemetery since the
[827] beginning of the day. They are young and strong men who have to work slowly, for not a drop of sweat may fall into the grave or their akka would risk remaining prisoner in it.

About 4:00 P.M. the bearers promenade the dead person one last time in the village for a supreme adieu. The near
[534] relatives go to the wharf. The dead man is hoisted into a canoe
[795] while the apinti drum calls his yɔrka so that it will not remain in the village.

/168 cont./

764 co-wife, on the contrary, are completely veiled and show by their state of prostration the keenest sorrow. Each of them is assisted by a female relative who supports them when they have to move somewhere else, for they are supposed to be too overcome to move alone.

764 787 761 The interrogation as to the causes of death has already taken place the day before, but Tafanié proclaims, in front of me, the result of it to the latest arrivals: the deceased was struck down by a yɔrka which pursues the lineage with its kunu. She had already received several warnings in the form of illness; the yɔrka had demanded a payment which she and her near relatives had neglected to furnish. Impossible to learn anything further before being able to interrogate this yɔrka, whose habitual bearer has left for Saint-Laurent. It is necessary to wait for his return in order to mollify the yɔrka's anger.

764 769 778 [613] About ten o'clock the members of the lãnti kuutu go toward the fraga tiki of the Awara Bakka lo, in front of which they all sit down on their stools. I notice that not a single man of the dead person's lineage appears in the front row. In it I recognize Popo (Lapé), Poopu (Dipélu II, Kormotibo), Tafanié (Papaïston). The one who is speaking is a foreigner passing through, a very aged and respected Djuka.

[782] The elders invoke Masa Gadu and the ancestors in general, asking them to protect them from adversity in the future; then the offering of water and tafia takes place (no cane juice). I notice that a little is poured on each of the secondary fraga tiki erected for the sake of each one of the ancestors who pursue another lineage with their kunu. That lasts about a quarter of an hour.

764 787 776 428 424 Next someone goes to ask the deceased to whom she bequeaths the Papa gadu god which manifested itself in her; for the gods are bequeathed like the rest of the inheritance, even if those concerned are divinities which exercise the kunu

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against the lineage. The god ratifies this legacy or not; in general it follows, they say, the wishes of its bearer and manifests itself some time afterward in the designated heir.

The coffin is placed on the heads of two men: Tafanié puts the questions with authority. He begins first by making sure of the passivity of the bearers, invites the dead woman to push their heads forward to say yes, to give them an impulse from right to left to say no.

The coffin advances and draws back several times; its weight is at the limit of what the two men can support. Two secondary bearers help the rear bearer, preventing the coffin from falling.

1. /Footnote at bottom of p. 168; no reference to it on the page/ Let us recall that this lineage, too few in numbers to constitute a separate social unit, lives with the Awara Bakka, with whom it has no connection through kinship or alliance.

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The dead woman suddenly leads her bearers across the village. We see it come back /169/ a quarter of an hour afterward, accompanied by a woman of about 35 years, Moni, in front of whom it stopped.

Tafanié asks whether it wishes to leave its god to her; the dead woman confirms. Upon the statement of this legacy Moni's face reflects no gladness at all, nor any fear.

They explain to me that the designated heiress can in no way refuse this legacy. She must immediately begin her instruction given by a teacher, in order to become a suitable bearer. The expenses of her instruction are borne by her lineage.

764 /169 cont./
787 They will be paid when the gita has been "arranged," that is,
796 has lost the bestial character of the beginning and when the god
428 can express itself in intelligible fashion.

764 There and then they busy themselves with transferring
787 the god out of the body of the deceased. An obiaman well
789 known in the cult of the Papa gadu, Goutu (Dju) and his pupil Balan (Aw.B.) come with calabashes containing infusions of leaves. Four or five women having a Papa gadu come and line up behind them. The heiress, with an extremely vexed air, takes her place among them, clothed with the emblems of the god of the dead woman; they are going to call their gods who will dance in honor of Kotoïda's god.

The obiaman and his pupil for several minutes trickle the infusion of herbs over the coffin, using packets of herbs like sponges, then they "wash" the women, including the postulant; he gives them the rest of the calabash to drink. One of the women, Samabun, falls immediately to the ground, attacked by the lowest form of possession: she drags herself on her belly like a snake (these are the first forms of the gita when it has not yet been "arranged." In her case that has lasted four years, contrary to what ordinarily happens. The scene was certainly anticipated, for she had put on European panties. The other women also drink but are not possessed; they leave to dress for dancing.

[534] The agida drum taken out of the god's chapel begins to beat, accompanied by two apinti.

The female bearers of Papa gadu arrive at the sound of the agida, smeared with pemba and carrying /wearing?--Tr./ the insignia of the god. Six come in all. They are not in a state of possession; only two will reach it. The first possessed woman keeps crawling on the ground, gropingly approaching the drum which she embraces, lying on her back. It is torn away from her. The obiaman continue to come to "wash"

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/169 cont./
her from time to time in order to help the god to manifest itself. The crowd presses around the women dancers who execute the greatest variety of figures. At times they embrace each other two by two in the Boni manner. The onlookers jump for joy.

The scene lasts about half an hour, then, at the signal given by one of them, the possessed ones scatter and begin to run through the village: this is the moment for the gods to pay the musicians. Each person rushes to hide his belongings, for the gods will steal anything in the village without anyone being able to prevent them: this is their way of paying.

Soon the possessed women come back, putting down at the feet of the musicians a heap of incongruous objects: /170/ calabashes, cloth, paddles, etc., which their owners come to recover by means of bottles of beer and eggs. Then the women who were truly possessed come back to their normal state and all go home.

This dance was not a success; those present think that it is because the women bearers had drunk tafia, which the Papa gadu detest.

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Inheritance. The dead woman is asked to whom she bequeaths her clearings. She answers: "To her family," this being understood because the bearers move parallel to the people present without designating anybody. Under these conditions the property must be distributed (Kotoïda having no children) among her classificatory nephews. Actually, the plantations still farmable will go to Samabun, her sister's daughter.

[591]

Inheritance of the house does not come up, for the dead woman lived in her husband Empalé's house.

The boat is left to Samabun.

Held back are the personal objects, money, jewelry, fabrics. When the mourning is lifted, the eldest of the surviving brothers or sisters in the classificatory sense will make the distribution among the near relatives.

/170 cont./

428 613 It is very clear in Kotoïda's case that the inheriting is within the matrilineage in the strict sense, bɛɛ. Only the members of the Afi lineage to which she belonged can profit by it.

764 Burial. About 2:00 P.M. the women of the lineage who had been preparing the food for the ɔlɔmã since morning leave by canoe in the direction of the cemetery.

At three o'clock the last preparations begin. The occupants of the mortuary shed, completely veiled and supported by their near relatives, go to take up positions at the wharf for the last farewells (for they will not go to the cemetery).

The coffin is carried through the village one last time. This is the farewell of the dead woman to her family. The objects used in mourning are carefully collected, the earth of the shed floor raked up wherever the sanies of the cadaver might have fallen, and the whole put on the papay which is placed on the mortuary bark.

[775] At three o'clock an apinti drum is placed on the wharf to call the dead person (it is obviously a question of preventing the yɔrka from remaining in the village). The dead person turns up at the wharf. The coffin passes over a freshly cut banana-tree trunk placed at the limit of the village and of the beach. This is the symbolic passing of the dead person out of the world of the living. It is put on the canoe while the lamentations of the near relatives resound. The scene is not lacking in grandeur.

[783] The canoe draws slowly away, the drummer in the bow, while the spectators go down in a long procession to wash themselves free of the defilement of death.

[767] At four o'clock they arrive at the cemetery. The bearers of the dead person who have taken places in the canoe pass their burden to the ɔlɔmã who have come to the edge of the river. This to mark the fact that /171/ the ɔlɔmã are in authority at the cemetery. The bearers will only be present at the ceremony.

/188 cont./

765 431 Nearly half of the tafia was brought to the mortuary shed to serve for the dances, the other half was distributed to visitors in the course of calls of personal interest that they were coming to make on the village people at home.

Béniti's three sons-in-law each gave three liters of tafia.

[613] The Boniville men belonging to other lineages each gave one liter, except the two principal basia (assistants to the grand man for the internal running of the village), Todo and Tofioto, who gave two liters each. Besides, each one kept one or two liters to offer to callers at their homes.

[613] As for the men of the Dju lo of Asisi, they brought one liter each, including the head of the lineage.

All the Boniville women and all the women of Asisi-Dju brought their contributions in the form of food.

In all about 150 adult visitors came.

765 293 One can estimate that about 200 liters of tafia were drunk, or a little more than a liter per person, which, for five days of festivities, is not enormous.

But since some drink very little, one can estimate that those most given to drunkenness drank up to three and four liters.

• 428 613

Inheritance

The custom of the Refugee Blacks, hostile to all that might divide the matrilineage, cannot accept the notion of a single heir entering into possession of all the property of the dead person and replacing him in his functions. This idea of the only heir considered as a substitute for the dead person, as it exists among the Bamiléké, which leads toward the individualization of one line within the lineage, can be regarded as the extreme opposite of the thought of the Refugee Blacks.

/188 cont./

428 [413] In the custom of the Refugee Blacks, the inheritance must be dispersed among the members of the dead person's matrilineage in the strict sense (ba.e) and his children. /189/ The custom of numerous African societies has it that the men inherit from men and the women from women. This notion is totally contrary to the legal thought of the Refugee Blacks. A house, an object, a boat, may pass from a man to a woman or conversely. It is the same with the lower gods with which the dead person might have been possessed.

428 789 924 If the dead person has not indicated before his death, in front of witnesses, the distribution of his property, the same divinatory procedure is used as for the determination of the causes of death: the coffin being carried on the heads of two men, in front of it are lined up the members of the dead person's matrilineage in the restricted sense and his children. The president of the lfnti kuutu asks: "To whom dost thou leave thy house?" The coffin moves toward one of those present, then: "To whom dost thou leave thy boat?" "To whom dost thou leave thy gun?" "To whom dost thou leave thy clearings being harvested?"

428 The partial heirs thus designated may enter immediately into possession of their legacies.

428 925 Reserved are what the Boni call the "equipment" of the dead person, that is, his personal belongings, linen, money, which will be divided up after the lifting of mourning.

The customary rule is the following:

[609] For the duration of the mourning, these objects shut up in a trunk are put under the care of the eldest child if a woman was concerned, of the eldest classificatory nephew if a man was concerned. After the lifting of mourning, the distribution is

428 [609] made by the dead person's mother, if she is still alive, if not by the eldest of the classificatory uncles or aunts, and if they all are dead, by the eldest of the surviving classificatory brothers or sisters of the dead person.

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428 Example: When △ Atikati (Dju. E18) died in 1953, about 75 years old, his house went to his sister Adyidya (E19), his gun to Kéwénu (G10), his boat to his classificatory sister Aliki (E23), aged 85.

602 Upon the lifting of mourning for Atikati, it was Aliki, by reason of being the eldest of the surviving classificatory sisters, who distributed his personal belongings and his money; for example, an iron bracelet went to Sosoman (E14) (1).

1. See the genealogical table of the Dju lineage.

428 613 602 By seeing the division of this inheritance on the genealogical table, one realizes that classificatory kinship is not a useless word and that in fact, within the matrilineage (beX), the division is made strictly at random, without consideration of sex, age, or proximity of kinship, which is strictly normal, given the divinatory procedure used.

428 778 602 An analogous conclusion comes out of the study of the inheritance of gods; the Papa gadu god of the ancestress ○Sapiké (D5) passed into Pamasa (E26), her kin in the seventh degree. Likewise the god Ampuku of △ Agoabuchi, passing from a man to a woman, went /190/ to Dabas (G45), his kin in the tenth degree at least (Agoabuchi could not be placed with certainty on the genealogical table). The Kumênu god of △ Antinon (D9) went to Achiké (F13).

428 Study of the inheritance of houses leads to analogous conclusions.

The only case where a certain systematization is seen to appear is that of inheriting from women having adult children. It seems (but this is not a legal principle) that these children receive the essential part of the inheritance.

/190 cont./

428 178 A tendency which has appeared during recent years in connection with men consists in bequeathing during their lifetime the essential part of their property to the children they have raised.

613 [789] Inheritance of functions and powers. Upon the death of a lineage head, the yɔtka of the dead man is asked whom it wishes to see named. Then the council assembles to proceed with the nomination; it remains free in its choice, the will of the dead man beyond the grave does not have the force of law; but actually, it seems to be most often followed.

As for the function of captain which is common to all the fractions of one lo, the inheritance may pass from one fraction to another.

Ex.: for the Awara Bakka lo, the succession:
Asèmbay (Aw.B.2);
Pèèyon (Aw.B.1);
Kondoku (Aw.B.1).

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CHAPTER VII

BELIEFS

Origin of the Beliefs of the Refugee Blacks

771 128 The spiritual life of the Refugee Blacks of the Guianas is intimately bound up with their social life, and the division we are obliged to make for the sake of clearness of the account is very often arbitrary. So we shall try to point out these connections wherever they are essential.

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787 --Possession is manifested by kinds of trances called gita or k3mfo, of a varying nature according to the divinity concerned, which sometimes involve phenomena of insensibility and acts impossible to perform in a normal state;

789 --The first time the divinity enters a man, it imposes
792 a kina (interdiction) upon him which will henceforth be the
784 sign of his function. This is what is called a gadu kina. This kina varies from one divinity to another, but in principle a given divinity imposes the same kina on its divers bearers. The divinity names itself and indicates to its bearer a means of calling it back in case of need: make such-and-such gestures, scatter such-and-such a liquid or powder.

All that is recorded by those present who reveal it to the person possessed when he has come round.

It is taken for granted that the god protects its bearer as long as the latter respects the laws of its cult and observes its kina (in the opposite case the god may punish him cruelly).
787 Conversely it is assumed that the man has a certain power, a
796 certain right over the god who possesses him. They say that he
789 is the master of it, masa, word which is habitually used in the
428 sense "to be the owner of." At his death he can bequeath this god in the forms and according to the laws regulating the inheritance of property. Of course the god is capable of not ratifying this decision, and it is free to manifest itself in anyone it wishes. But they affirm that in most cases it follows docilely the choice of its bearer. We shall see that this inheritance of gods plays an essential role in the functioning of the kunu.

787 Apprenticeship for possession. What goals does a man pursue
181 who desires thus to have a gadu? Above all he seeks strength. To succeed in life, to be protected against his enemies, to be respected: Such are the goals generally pursued and openly recognized by the Refugee Blacks who "have a gadu."

/205 cont./

796 613 428 [789] Still, they assume that the gods that have entered a matrilineage tend to be transmitted within this group. If, for example, a woman is possessed by a Papa gadu, at her death she must bequeath it in the same way as her property, and she can bequeath it only to someone of her lineage.

We have seen in studying the transmission of the god of Kotolda († 1956), that only the women of the Afi lineage to which she belonged could inherit.

796 613 984 Even if the god is not bequeathed, which sometimes happens, if it exercises the kunu, it will manifest itself sooner or later in a member of the lineage. But long years may pass before it shows itself. This conception is absolutely clear to the Refugee Blacks, and furthermore, if it did not exist, the [114] [428] idea of the kunu would be without support. People have therefore wrongly believed in a transmission of gods from father to son.

346 789 994 613 Material organization of cults. A material organization of the cults of possession exists within the limits of the localized lineage (lo). This organization is completely independent of the apprenticeship of these cults. It permits the members of the lineage to easily practice cults they have received anywhere, on their own responsiblity.

In each lo there exists in general one single chapel (obia ɔsu) for all the divinities of the same category.

For example in the Awara Bakka lo quarter in Asisi (140 persons), for about 15 women having a Papa gadu, there exists only a single one. There is an obia ɔsu for the Ampuku (three or four possessed persons) and another for the Kumẽnti (about ten possessed people).

The chapel of the Papa gadu is placed under the responsibility of the head of the lo. On this subject it is to be noted that the individualized lineages Aw.B.3 and Afi, which however have separate gods, are included in this organization.

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346 794 787 613 The objects placed in these chapels are simply the clothing, beverage, and tools of the gods when they come to visit men; they correspond nearly to what the Refugee Blacks leave in a farming habitation where they go to work regularly. For [293] example, in the Papa gadu ɔsu of the Awara Bakka quarter of Asisi, which serves for about 15 gods, each one has a definite place on the shelves to lay out especially the scarf which serves it as a garment and a bottle of beer (a bottle is always kept in readiness by the bearer of the god) (1).

1. The Papa gadu do not like tafia. If the usual bearer of one of these gods has drunk tafia, it cannot come into him.

[534] They still stow the Papa dɔ̃ drum in this chapel. This drum, like the chapel itself, is believed to belong to the Papa gadu god which first came into a member of the lineage to exercise the kunu. In the example mentioned of the Awara [428] /206/ Bakka lo of Asisi, in 1957 it was the centenarian grandmother Kuluba who had borne this god since her youth, having herself received it, by several successive transmissions, from a distant ancestress.

[621] In villages like Boniville and Papaïston where fragments of lineage of entirely different origins coexist, each has its own organization.

For example in Boniville there is a Papa gadu ɔsu for the fragment of the Lapé lineage (it belongs to Térésa whose god exercises the kunu on this lineage). The fragment of the lineage has another.

In Papaïston the Tolna (Bakabuchi) lineage, reduced to half a dozen persons, has a Papa gadu ɔsu of its own.

/222 cont./

114 784 The various works treating of the Refugee Blacks point out well the importance of the kunu, but it seems to us that the functioning of this institution (for in fact a social institution is certainly concerned here) has not been clearly understood.

784 613 A kunu is attached to a matrilineage in the literal sense (b&s). It extends obligatorily to all the members of the matrilineage and can strike only them.

For example, my kunu can strike my sister's son but not my wife nor my children (they are subject to the kunu of their own lineage). /223/

[782] The kunu, striking the lineage as a whole, can be appeased only by prayers uniting (at least in principle) the whole lineage. That is the respect in which the kunu may be defined [591] as a social institution, for it is, we shall see, the principal cement holding the groups together.

The unleashing of a kunu does not necessarily and immediately follow the destruction of a termitary or the death of a dagowe snake. The god thus offended avenges itself by making a certain number of members of the lineage sick and 784 by causing limited misfortunes to happen. When things are 613 at that point the kunu can still be exorcised by prayers and 782 offerings. In 1957 the beginning of a kunu was manifesting itself thus in the Awara Bakka lineage of Asisi; very frightened, the members of the lineage made offerings and prayers to exorcise it.

784 But if the lineage people neglect the warnings of the god, 613 if through laziness or selfishness too great a number of them [693] are absent from the collective prayers and do not take part in [761] the offerings, prayers and offerings will be refused and the god will kill one of them. From then on the kunu is unleashed and can no longer leave the lineage. Its involuntary bearer [728] will have to bequeath it upon his death to a member of the lineage, who cannot refuse this legacy and must immediately

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784 613 428 begin his instruction in order to become a suitable bearer. (If this procedure were not carried out, the god would not cease its kunu at all, and the possibility of entering into contact with it and appeasing it would be lost. Besides, sooner or later it would come back into a member of the lineage.)

784 613 [602] The kunu strikes without regard to kinship ties, even if kinship between the bearer of the god and the supposed victim is very distant. Ex.: The Papa gadu of Donasi (Papaïston lo) struck a young woman, Gou, with illness in January, 1957. Donasi and Gou are only relatives in the ninth degree. The [782] [361] members of the entire Papaïston lineage assembled to supplicate the god: even people of Wétiti village in the lower Maroni came.

775 784 613 The kunu exercised by the yɔrka of a dead person has a special importance in the eyes of the Refugee Blacks, for it has profound repercussions on the relations among the lineages.

[428] In principle, the yɔrka exercising a kunu has as bearer a living member of its own lineage, who will bequeath it at his death. But it is also possible that the yɔrka may take as bearer a member of the lineage upon which it exercises the kunu.

[782] In both cases, the rite to appease the yɔrka is the same; the yɔrka can be invoked effectively only by the members of its own lineage, since one can pray (at least in principle) only to one's own maternal ancestors.

When matrilineage A is struck by the kunu exercised by a yɔrka of matrilineage B, its members thereupon go to consult the elders of matrilineage A /sic/ and ask them to try to calm [769] [778] [787] the anger of their ancestor. The members of lineage A assemble around the fraga tiki of lineage B, in back of the elders of this lineage, in the presence of the bearer of the yɔrka, who calls on his gita, goes into trances and prophesying. The yɔrka [782] usually asks for an offering of cane juice and tafia, which is made at the foot of the /224/ fraga tiki by the elders of lineage B (for the rite to be efficacious, the offering must have been furnished by lineage A).

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775 784 769 778 613 A yɔrka exercising a kunu may also demand that another smaller fraga tiki be erected for it beside the principal fraga tiki of its lo. In the villages of the Refugee Blacks one often sees these little crosses provided with white veils like the main fraga tiki, planted beside it a little obliquely.

775 784 674 The notion of the kunu exercised by a yɔrka explains the rarity of murder among the Refugee Blacks. How would you dare to kill someone when, as soon as it is freed from his body, his yɔrka will have full latitude to make you sick, to make tree branches fall across your path, to cause to suffer and to kill all those dear to you? If someone is blinded by hate, it is the idea of suicide which will dominate him. In October, 1952 we were able to observe this reaction in a man who had just been subject to a deep humiliation: "I am going to kill my body in order to go to kill that man and his whole family," he said to us, prey to a fit of rage; fortunately, when the fit had passed, he came back to a more sound outlook on things.

775 784 613 696 [171] It is to be noted that a yɔrka cannot exercise a kunu against its own lineage. This notion explains why, in the times when they exercised absolute authority, tribal chiefs had those condemned to death executed by men of the same lineage. Apparently similar practices were the rule in olden days in several African kingdoms, which allows one to think that notions analogous to those of the kunu may be rather widespread there.

784 613 Situation of the various lineages with respect to the kunu. There we touch on one of the most secret aspects of the social life of the Refugee Blacks. Years of living among them are necessary in order to obtain precise information on the nature and the mode of action of the kunu acting on the various lineages.

784 613 428 Nearly all the entities which now exercise their kunu on the Boni have been in their lineages since a very ancient period, to the point where the name of their first bearer is forgotten. They are transmitted inexorably from generation to generation. In the course of the ages, the kunu have accumulated, and now certain lineages are living with four, five, or even six kunu.

/226 cont./

628 The members of the Dipélu lineage did not believe a
614 word of this affair, convinced that Kiboya, a proud and scheming
784 woman, had pretended the gita to make herself interesting.
787 Nevertheless, to bring back peace, they decided to go to Asisi
156 and to ask pardon in front of the fraga tiki, pouring tafia,
769 asking the ancestors not to take vengeance, the living being
778 reconciled. /227/

784 /227/ (Note that in this affair, the yɔrka manifests itself in a
614 member of the lineage on which it exercises the kunu.)
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784 Kunu of the Awara Bakka lineage. The Awara Bakka lineage
614 does not form a unit with respect to the kunu, and the situation
613 of its fractions is particularly interesting. This lineage includes:

--A principal fraction (Aw.B.1);

--A fraction whose kinship ties with the first are forgotten (Aw.B.2), whose position with respect to the kunu we have not been able to define.

--Finally, a group descended from Anèta, Djuka woman, wife of Péèyon † (Aw.B.1) settled in Asisi with her descendants in uterine line. We have called this group Aw.B.3. It has a separate kunu originating in the Djuka village of Tabiki where Anèta came from.

784 The Awara Bakka I, all living in Asisi village, had to
787 our knowledge three kunu in 1957:
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613 --One exercised by a Papa gadu god, borne up to 1957
428 by O Kuluba (Aw.B.1, D1). At her death in April, 1957, she bequeathed it, contrary to custom, to a person of another fraction, Summa (Aw.B.3). But the god did not ratify this legacy and, in January, 1958; it manifested itself in O Léna (Aw.B.1, F52), thus remaining in the same lineage;

/229 cont./

784 613 [428] The kunu and Boni family life. It follows from the detailed examination we have just made of the situation of the various lineages that the transmission of the kunu within the uterine kin group is a rigorous law which suffers no exception whatever. [571] [602] The process of assimilation which permits in a certain measure, on the social plane, the integration of fragments of paternal kin (like Awara Bakka 3) into a group does not come into play here. [611] [829] Unity with respect to the kunu can therefore be regarded as a rigorous criterion of a common matrilineal origin. The Boni feel it as an obvious fact and in such a case it is the proof that comes to their minds: "We are of the same origin since we have the same kunu."

784 613 571 182 Thus the kunu appears as the principal cement of the unity of the groups. It opposes the dissociation of the lineages; this curse which weighs collectively upon a group and which can be exorcised only collectively is an iron bond which nothing can break. It obliges the Refugee Blacks to surmount their individualistic tendencies, their egoism which, if they acted freely, would soon have scattered them into a dust of [888] [888] separate persons. In the face of adversity each one accepts with good grace obedience to the elders, who alone know how [672] to talk to the gods and appease them. Nobody ever is indignant or even surprised to be struck down for the offense of another; there is not a movement of revolt or hostility against the one who by his inattention or inconsiderateness has brought on misfortune. On this plane the members of a lineage feel like cells of a single body.

784 613 672 The collective legal responsibility of the members of a group in the domain of customary law flows from the kunu. We have observed that several times, notably at the time of the obsequies for Kotoïda (Afi lineage) in October, 1956. The president of the lãnti kuutu condemned the members of

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75 784 796 It is important not to confuse the kunu with the sufferings which other divinities can arbitrarily make men undergo. The kunu has a systematic character. But a divinity theoretically beneficent, and which has come into a man after being called on, may also from time to time bring misfortunes if such is its whim of the moment.

752 796 784 [787] [428] In 1949, G... (Dju) was busy cooking a crab in the house of his mother D... A machete which was fastened to the wall suddenly detached itself and wounded him in the right hand. Now his mother had an Ampuku which had imposed the crab on her as kina. This Ampuku, immediately called on, revealed that it really was it which had struck G..., for it did not like to see D...'s son eat crab (note that G... was not at all held to the observance of this kina, for no kina is transmitted from mother to son).

784 795 613 969 Neither must the kunu exercised by a yɔrka be confused with the vengeance that a dead person can exercise against the members of his own lineage in order to punish them for having neglected their duties.

Punishment inflicted by an ancestor of the lineage seems for the Boni to be a notion distinct from that of the kunu. Vengeance exercised by a yɔrka upon its own lineage is regarded as exceptional and devoid of the inexorable and definitive character of the kunu, but they assume it to be possible. They cited to us the case of Yali (Loka), who committed suicide when accused of sorcery by the people of his lineage. Since then, his yɔrka has caused sicknesses and deaths in his own village.

[762] [753] [761]

796 784 613 [761] Conversely, a god which exercises the kunu upon a lineage may in certain cases intervene in favor of this lineage if such is its whim of the moment. Thus the death of Diamanti (Aw.B.2, Asisi village, † in 1955) is attributed to the god which exercises the kunu on the village of L'Enfant Perdu and whose bearer was Péechina. Diamanti had wronged someone of this village and the god had intervened against her.

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775 A few years ago a Kormotibo woman was thus confounded.
787 She had wanted to pretend possession by a yɔrka in order to
695 blackmail another family.

Grand Man Difu recently forbade the bequeathing of gods
784 and yɔrka exercising the kunu (1). People will wait for them
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[787]

1. Let us recall that the dead are questioned on this subject as for the apportionment of the rest of their heritage.

to manifest themselves of their own accord. That will reduce the risks of pretense.

643 The grand man's lineage does not exercise any kunu upon
613 another lineage, and no kunu is exercised upon it. For the Boni
775 this is a fundamental idea, because the grand man is precisely
784 the supreme recourse in case of persistent calamities attributed to the yɔrka of a dead person. The grand man has the power to exorcise all the dead Boni. If his lineage exercised a kunu or were victim of one, he would be judge and litigant at the same time.

When, with the death of Grand Man Difu, the Dikan lineage is extinct, and when the function passes to another lineage, consideration of the kunu exercised by the lineages upon one another will be determinative in the choice of his successor.

787 Divination; Premonition; Dreams
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182 Divination. It plays an essential role among the Refugee Blacks as in all animistic societies. Individuals have recourse to it to inspire all important discussions; in large measure one can say that for them it takes the place of will and conscience.

/236 cont./

787 very serious question, the asker contents himself with going to interrogate a divinity in which he has confidence. If, when put to the test, the advice turns out to be bad, he goes to consult others and if he obtains the same advice from two different directions, he stops there. If not, he appeals to the elders of his village to bring into play the processes of divination which they alone know.

[888] [791]

A second category of divinatory procedures consists in the use of "remedies," whose origin is unknown and which are transmitted like a personal belonging.

[428]

The process reputed to be the surest, in which everybody has confidence, is called pusu. The instrument is composed simply of a rope made of fibers of the Mauritia (2) palm tree

[824]

[439]

2. Palm tree which grows in the coastal savannas and whose fibers are bought from the Galibi Indians. The word pusu, like gita, kandu, mula, is of Congolese origin. In Kikongo, mpuusu = raffia palm tree.

which has been dipped in an infusion of herbs; it is stretched horizontally between two stakes. The elder brings near it a machete blade heated red-hot, at the same time asking the question. If the answer is positive, the rope is cut when the iron has scarcely touched it. If the answer is no, they state that the red-hot iron remains in contact with the rope for an appreciable length of time without the rope's being cut.

They will say for example: ɛfu na Ampuku siki X, a how a 'ã mu do: fosi a kɔti: If it is an Ampuku which is making X sick, the machete must cut (the rope) before (even) reaching it.

/251 cont./

751 789 Renewal of the power of the ɔbia. The Refugee Blacks have the idea that no magic power can last if it is not renewed by formulas and offerings appealing to the god from which it came. [824] Each year, at variable dates for each ɔbia, one must renew the power of the ɔbia by dipping the support object into a maceration of certain leaves. This renewal may not take place on January 1. On that day all leaves lose their power. /252/

[768] Mr. W. F. van Lier writes that among the Djuka, objects (bracelets, etc.) serving as support for a magic remedy are thrown away upon the death of the owner for they have lost [184] all power. The Boni do not have this conception; with them, [428] these objects keep their value for the dead person's son provided that before dying he voluntarily transmitted them to him by giving him mula.

789 428 613 Transmission of ɔbia. An ɔbia is often bequeathed simultaneously to a son and to a nephew. Care is taken not to lose the ɔbia for the lineage. Thus it is that certain lineages have certain ɔbia as their specialty.

789 [171] Kãndu. The Refugee Blacks call kãndu a magic object intended to protect property (houses, harvests) against theft. This procedure is also very much used by the Creoles.

There are three common kinds of kãndu:

--Piiti tiki kãndu. It is made of a split stick stuck into the ground, in the slit of which dry banana leaves or small sticks are placed horizontally. This device originated in Dahomey.

--Sikopu kãndu. It involves a shovel stuck into the ground in front of the house (the idea of the shovel is associated with the idea of death, for this instrument is used particularly in digging graves).

--Bɔɔ kãndu, made up of a bow and arrow planted in the ground.

/252 cont./

789 The one who installs a kãndu utters the formula: mi poti yu ya, ɛfu a sama kɔm fu fufu mi sani, yu mu siki ẽn (I put thee here; if someone comes to steal my belongings, thou must make him sick).

[784] If someone goes beyond /it/ and commits a theft, he will be struck sooner or later with various sicknesses.

According to the conceptions of the Refugee Blacks, the kãndu is blind and strikes as well the friend who came to take objects because he received previous authorization to do it. So, many forego placing kãndu, as with us, peop[illegible]tate to set wolf-traps for fear of causing accidents.

789 784 428 However, the kãndu does not act upon the people who have the same basic interdiction (bwasi kina) as the one who placed it. This conception shows that these interdictions transmitted from father to children really are the mark of true patrilineages.

694 789 754 In fact, we have ascertained several times, there are burglaries in Boni country in spite of the kãndu and people do not succeed in uncovering the burglars; it is infinitely probable that one must not see in this the stamp of freethinkers who do not believe in sorcery; these are people who have obtained from a wisimã a talisman of black magic stronger than the kãndu! At least this is the explanation their victims give.

789 751 One can lift a kãndu on behalf of any man, whom one wants, for example, to send to get an object which one has forgotten; for that it is sufficient to give him mula: one blows into one's hands and lays them on the man's head, saying: mi puu a kãndu gi yu, a 'ã mu du a sani ãŋga yu: I withdraw the kãndu for thee, it must not do anything to thee. /253/

Mula can be given retroactively: If someone perceives that he has inadvertently incurred the chastisement of a kãndu, he has several days to be able to ask for mula from the owner, for the action of the kãndu is slow.

752 834 [171] /255 cont./ ɔbiaman who treats a wound made by a firearm to observe chastity during the whole duration of the treatment. It is for this reason that the Boni hesitate to have gunshot wounds cared for in hospitals.

784 [262] Kina. The interdictions of the Refugee Blacks generally have to do with food. There are five categories of them to our knowledge:

[753] --Bwasi kina, basic kina, mark of patrilineages, the breaking of which gives leprosy;

--Akka kina, often called gadu kina, established by divination and believed to be imposed by the akka;

--Gadu kina, mark of possession by a divinity;

--Obia kina, interdiction attached to each object involving a magic power, and which must be observed for this power to last;

--Finally, local kina, particularly the kina dɛ, days of rest, going back to the idea of the day of rest of the local divinity. They observe, for example, that the Mana River has a kina dɛ on Sunday. The Saramaka observe it strictly. The Boni we took on the Mana in 1949 went to find out from the Saramaka, and asked us to stop navigation on Sunday, [648] for this kina was very urgent. It is noteworthy however that the Boni bow in such circumstances before the will of the Europeans, as with respect to their own kina dɛ of Friday; in effect they are assuming that if they are ordered to be on duty, it is the European alone who bears the responsibility for breaking the kina.

[428] [114] [613] It is possible that the kina alluded to by Mr. W. F. Van Lier and which, among the Djuka, would be imposed on a whole matrilineage are also local kina; in any case no kina is transmissible through the mother, all the Refugee Blacks are explicit on that point.